

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

Rejections under 35 USC §103

Claims 1-12 and 14-22 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Conklin (US 6,141,653) and further in view of Huberman (US Patent 5,826,244). The Final Office Action states "Fig. 15b-16 are the web forms corresponding to job request object and the vendor-specific instances," as claimed in claims 1, 5, 12, 15, and 22. "Fig. 15b is a typical proposal form for a buyer." [col 25, lines 41-57]. "Once the buyer has sent its proposal, the seller is alerted by the system by email (as seen in Fig. 20) that a proposal is available on the system for review and negotiation." [col 25, line 60-62]. Once the seller (using its browser) becomes aware from the e-mail that a proposal is available it jumps immediately, using the link mentioned above in the email, to view a browser screen such as that shown in Fig. 16, which shows a proposed order with payment by letter of credit from the above buyer. [col 25 line 64 – col 26 line 2].

The Applicants respectfully submit that the Conklin reference does not differentiate between a print job request object and vendor specific instances of the print job request object. Specifically, the Conklin reference does not teach or suggest a print job object, as claimed, where "each vendor specific instance of the print job request object defined through a series of iterative customer submissions and vendor responses to all the customer to select one of the plurality of vendors to perform the print job project", as claimed. For example, the initial under constrain job description of a print job request object may be defined by a customer, where each subsequent individual vendor response to the print job object generates

multiple vendor-specific instances of the print job object. Each instance has various defining characteristics gathered through a “series of iterative vendor responses and customer submissions”, as claimed. Defining vendor-specific versions of a print job object in vendor-specific instances, as claimed, allows the customer to compare and to select a specific vendor from a combined view to perform a print job project and also allows the customer to control the manner in which various vendor bids/estimates are presented for review. Furthermore, Fig. 15b only illustrates a proposal and does not suggest or teach that each vendor response will spawn a vendor specific instance of the original print job request object for each vendor, nor how a comparison of the vendor specific instances of a print job object is made to select a vendor to perform a print job project.

Furthermore, Figures 15b-16 fail to illustrate how the negotiations engine may be configured to compare multiple seller information within a combined view, from multiple sellers, to perform a print job project, as claimed in claims 1, 5, 15, and 22. That is, the Conklin reference does not teach or suggest the “comparing a plurality of vendor specific instances of an electronic print job request object **within a combined view**”, as amended in claims 1, 5, 15, and 22.

The Huberman reference fails to cure the underlying deficiencies of the Conklin reference as stated above. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 1, 5, 12, 15, and 22 are not obvious by Conklin in view of Huberman under 35 USC 103(a). Therefore, at least for the reasons above, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application and the withdrawal of the rejection to the remaining claims.


The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at 408-720-8300 if there remains any issue with allowance of this case.

Please charge any shortage to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Claims 1, 5, 15 and 21 have been amended as follows:

1. (Amended Twice) A computer-based method, comprising comparing a plurality of vendor specific instances of an electronic print job request object within a combined view, each vendor specific instance of the print job request object to represent a relationship between a customer and one of a plurality of vendors to perform a print job project, each vendor specific instance of the print job request object defined through a series of iterative customer submissions and vendor responses to allow the customer to select one of the plurality of vendors to perform the print job project.

5. (Amended Twice) A computer system configured to allow a customer and a plurality of vendors to interact with one another in defining a plurality of vendor specific instances of a electronic print job request object for a print job project by permitting the customer to compare within a combined view, in an initially under-constrained fashion, each vendor specific instance of the print job request object and further permitting the vendors and the customer to successively develop each vendor specific instance of the print job request object to a fully-constrained form through an iterative process in which one or more constraints on one of the vendor specific instances the print job request object are added, removed and/or modified during each iteration.

15. (Amended Twice) A Web server having one or more user interfaces to allow a customer and a plurality of vendors to [define] view one or more vendor specific instances of a electronic print request object for a print job project within a combined view, the user interfaces configured to allow the customer and the vendors to connect with the web server permitting the customer to compare, in an initially under-constrained fashion, each vendor specific instance of the print job request object and further permitting the vendors and the customer to successively develop each request object to a fully-constrained form through an iterative process in which one or more constraints on the vendor specific instances of the print job request object are added, removed and/or modified during each iteration.

21. (Amended) A method of comparing proposals from a plurality of vendors comprising:

defining, through a series of iterative customer submissions and vendor responses, information concerning a print job project, the information being stored in a plurality of vendor-specific instances of a print job object; and

comparing two or more vendor-specific instances of the print job object within a combined view to select one of the plurality of vendors to perform the print job project.